

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1. (currently amended) An advertisement space auction method using a network to auction advertisement space within content data streamed to a recipient, comprising the steps of:

storing advertisement space information in a memory of an advertisement space information management server, said memory being accessible by a plurality of entities connected to said network;

receiving bid data submitted from at least one of said plurality of entities via said network at an auction management server, said bid data corresponding to said advertisement space information stored in said memory; and

on the basis of said bid data received, determining a winning bidder for an advertisement space corresponding to said advertisement space information;

wherein an advertisement object designated by the winning bidder is inserting into the advertisement space of the content data streamed to the recipient.

Claim 2. (original) The advertisement space auction method according to claim 1, wherein

said advertisement space information contains information indicating a period of time allowed for submitting said bid data; and

said winning bidder is determined on the basis of a plurality of said bid data submitted during said period of time allowed therefor.

Claim 3. (previously presented) The advertisement space auction method according to claim 1, wherein said advertisement space information contains data on recipient addressees scheduled to receive an advertisement.

Claim 4. (previously presented) The advertisement space auction method according to claim 1, wherein

said advertisement space is determined corresponding to a distribution cluster of recipient addressees that receive an advertisement inserted in said advertisement space, said distribution cluster containing a plurality of entities having a common characteristic; and

said advertisement space information containing data on said common characteristic.

Claim 5. (original) The advertisement space auction method according to claim 1, wherein said advertisement space information contains evaluation information on said advertisement space designated in said advertisement space information.

Claim 6. (original) The advertisement space auction method according to claim 1, wherein said network is an open network accessible by a plurality of general public users.

Claim 7. (currently amended) An advertisement space auction apparatus using a network to auction advertisement space within content data streamed to a recipient, comprising:

an advertisement space information management server having a memory for storing advertisement space information and for being accessed by a plurality of entities connected to said network; and

an auction management server for managing auctioning of the advertisement space designated by the advertisement space information, including:

a bid data communication unit for receiving bid data submitted via said network from at least one of said plurality of entities, said bid data corresponding to said advertisement space information stored in said memory; and

a winning bidder determination unit for determining a winning bidder of an-the advertisement space designated by said advertisement space information based on said bid data received by said bid data communication unit;

wherein an advertisement object designated by the winning bidder is inserted into the advertisement space of the content data streamed to the recipient.

Claims 8-15. (canceled)